Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, - - - MISSOURI.

MEN AND SPIDERS.

I FLUNG a stone into a grassy field:
How many tiny creatures there may yield
(I thought) their petty lives through that rude shock!
To me a pebble, 'tis to them a rock,
Gigantic, cruel, and fraught with sudden death.
Perhaps it crushed an ant, perhaps its breath
Alone tore down a white and glittering palace,
And the small spider damns the giant's malice
Who wrought the wreck—blasted his pretty art!
Who knows what day a saunterer, light of heart,
An idle wanderer through the fields of space,
Large-limbed, big-brained, to whom our puny race
Seems small as insects; one whose footstep jars
On some vast continent islanded by stars,—
Who knows when he, just leaning oe'r the bars,
May fling a stone and crush our earth to bits,
And all that men have builded with their wits?
Ah, what a loss! you say; our bodies go,
But not our temples, statues, and the glow
Of glorious canvases; and not the pages
Our poets have illumed through myriad ages.
What boots the insects loss? Another day
Will see the self-same ant-hill, and the play
Of light on dainty web the same.
You say
The spider's work is not original,—
But what of ours? Ah! friend, I think that all
We do is just the same thing over and over.
Take Life: you have the woman and her lover—
'Tis old as Eden, nothing new in that!
Take Building, and you reach ere long the flat
Nile desert sands, by way of France, Rome, Greece.
And there is Poetry—our bards increase
In numbers, but, before John Keats, the robe
Of Song was worn by Shakspeare, Dante, Job.
No, no! The forms may change, but even they
Come round again. Could we but scan it
We'd find in the heavens some little, busy planet
Whence all we are was borrowed; and if to-day
The imagined giant flung his ponderous stone,
And we and all our mighty schemes were done,
His were a scant remorse and short-lived trouble
As mine for those small creatures in the stubble.

—*R. W. Gilder, in Scribner's Monthly.*

A STRANGE INTRODUCTION.

I MUST, I suppose, introduce myself, as I have undertaken to bring a portion of my history before the public, and shall begin by telling my name and state.

I, George Falconer, then, am one of the members of the Civil Service whom *Punch* so unfairly likened, some time since, to the fountains in Trafalgar Square, accusing us, like them, of "playing from eleven till four daily." But Mr. Punch was for once mistaken, and should be informed that we who thus *civilly* serve our country have not the easy times we are supposed to have. Having relieved my mind by which protest, I will proceed with the narration of my story.

"Well, then, being tired with a heavy day's work, I walked, perhaps somewhat languidly, up Regent Street, making for my rooms in Margaret Street, where I knew I should find my dinner awaiting me. It had been a sultry August day, and London, with its slack trade time and many shuttered windows, looked like a city of the dead.

Nobody was in town, which means nobody worth knowing; and I was myself longing to get away among the grouse, or by the salt sea waves, to inhale the briny, and blow off the London smuts and cobwebs, which gather alike on mind and body; and indeed men need this bracing-up of nerves and sinews, to enable them to resist the suicidal feeling engendered by the London fogs which are to follow—thick enough to frighten the Zulus, if they could only be enveloped in them for a few hours. As I said before, I was tired, and longing to get away for a holiday. But my seniors had to be satisfied first, and I had to await my turn; and that is why I was in the great metropolis when every one else was gone, with the exception of a few unfortunates like myself.

It was one of those days of leaden heat, when the sun does not seem to shine so brightly after all, nor to send down scorching rays; yet when the very fish in the Serpentine come to the surface and gasp; when the pavements sear your feet, and your boots feel several sizes too small; when to hold up an umbrella would be useless exertion and absurd, and it is impossible to find out which direction the wind is in, for there is not the faintest breath of air to indicate it; when the weary cab-horses loll out their parched and thirsty tongues, with scarcely the energy to whisk the tormenting flies from their harness galls; when one could drink the sea dry, if only it were not salt! I had taken a long time walking home; but I was nearly there at last; I had only to turn the corner of the street, and within a few doors I should find one which fitted my latch-key—*that* I knew—when a slight diversion occurred.

An elderly gentleman passing in a hansom cab was frantically gesticulating to some one near me, but to whom I could not imagine, as, on looking round, I saw no one at all likely to be the familiar acquaintance of the person in the cab, who was an aristocratic-looking old man.

One thing I felt sure about—it could not be *me* he was signaling to, as I had never set eyes on his face before; and it was a face which, if seen once, would not readily be forgotten. The cabman was drowsy, and, having received his orders where to drive, he was enjoying a sort of dog's sleep, with only half an eye open, the faithful horse chiefly guiding himself amid the not very crowded traffic of the dull streets, and not troubling himself to pass any vehicle which might be said to be trotting.

I couldn't resist a half smile at the futile efforts of the gentleman to get the driver to stop, and thought for a moment of going to his rescue; but this would have entailed exertion, and that was out of the question on such a day. And, after all, what business was it of mine? The man might be a maniac for all I knew, grimacing at his own reflection in the plate-glass of the shop-windows.

I turned my corner with the full intention of putting on my slippers and a white-flannel boating-jacket, and sitting down to dinner looking more like a miller or a baker than a respectable member of society. Not that I intend for a moment to insult one trade or the other. Both are very good in their way, and we couldn't do without them; but, you see, *their* way is not *our* way, and I intended not to look like a respectable member of *our* society. But why a coat like a *miller* should be less respectable than a coat like a *waiter* is one of those things which I imagine no man can fully understand or explain. A black swallow-tail is correct—is usual—it is the custom. Yes, I know; but why?

"Well, George, old boy, how are you?" cried a hearty voice, as my footsteps ascended the stairs.

"Why, old man, who ever thought of seeing you—and on such a day too? It is like living in an oven. What has brought *you* up to town, away from your shooting and country breezes? You don't find it a very good exchange, I should think, Bruce."

"Business, George! Business, you know, must be attended to," he replied, laughing, at the same time almost shaking my hand off, and using an energy which would have been impossible with me on such a day, and which, even second-hand, I found quite exhausting.

"Business!" I echoed. "Why, what business have *you*, except enjoying all the goods the gods provide you with? Ah, Bruce! you are one of the few lucky fellows born with a silver spoon ready to feed you" (for my old schoolfellow and friend had well-lined pockets and a comfortable estate in prospective, as the only son of a wealthy man of good family).

"Never fear, my boy," he answered cheerily; "the spoon will come to *you* some day, and sooner than you think, perhaps. And now I am going to carry you off to the theater to night. Where shall we go?"

"The theater! Why, we should be suffocated!" I gasped.

"Not a bit of it," he answered. "You shall have as many ices as you please to cool you. I've only this one night in town, and I'm not to be baulked of going to the play. You Londoners don't know what it is to enjoy things as we countrymen do."

"But why come up for so short a time? I can put you up as long as you like, and—"

"O, you'll feel more 'fit' when you have had your dinner, George. By the bye, when *shall* we have it? I am deucedly hungry, I can tell you."

"Hungry!" I murmured, looking at my friend in astonishment. "Well, old man, you *are* a wonder. Fancy anyone being hungry to-day!"

And sure enough he was. I acknowledged the fact as I saw the breast of a chicken, followed by the wing, merrythought, and two legs, vanish before him like summer lightning, assisted by several slices of ham, and an alarming quantity of vegetables and bread. I watched and envied him his appetite. Of course he had his way, the great big overpowering fellow! He was some years older than myself, and I had been his "fag" at Eton. Not that he had ever *bullied* me; still, I was accustomed to follow out his wishes; and to the theater we went. "Our Boys" was being acted, and upon that he decided. We took our places in the stalls; the curtain rose, and the piece began.

My friend Tom Bruce was instantly absorbed in the plot—ready to laugh at all the jokes, and pretty nearly to cry at the pathetic parts. Soft-hearted old fellow! I had seen "Our Boys" till I knew just when to expect the tid-bits; so I was not giving much attention to the stage. And then I saw coming toward the stalls the very same old gentleman whom I had seen in the hansom cab some hours before; and I fell to wondering if he had managed to rouse the driver and stop his friend. I smiled as I remembered his excitement, and looked up at him. To my astonishment, I found him regarding me with a most annoyed, not to say stern, expression of face. I supposed he had seen me in the afternoon, and had noted that I was amused at him, and now was determined to resent it—a fact not likely to be particularly pleasant, as he walked up and took possession of the very next seat to the one which I occupied. I had no wish to annoy my neighbor; so I fixed my eyes upon the stage, and tried to be interested in the actors; but all the time I was aware that the gentleman in the next seat was doing me the honor of staring intently at me, and that he was becoming very angry. And then he said "Edward!"

A man had taken the place on the other side of him—*that* I saw without looking. Could *he* be Edward? Yet I felt that my neighbor's face was turned toward *me*. First he had spoken in a low tone; but now he raised his voice, and said again "Edward!" so suddenly that it made me jump. Still I did not turn round, as it was no business of mine, and I did not wish to give my irascible neighbor any cause of offense.

"Do you hear me, sir?" he continued hotly. "What is the use of your pretending not to see me?"

By this time Tom Bruce's attention had been attracted, and I was feeling very uncomfortable, for a violent jerking was going on at my left coat-sleeve; and the idea had returned to me that this excitable gentleman was out of sound mind, and having the distaste for being made a "laughing-stock"—which is strong in most people—I feared lest he had singled *me* out to render me absurd in the eyes of all assembled there. A more violent tug, however, made me turn with an indignant remonstrance.

"To what am I indebted, sir, for this unusual conduct?" I asked.

"What the deuce are *you* doing here at all?" he replied in an angry tone.

("Mad," I said inwardly. "Mad as a hatter!")

"Sir," I answered, solemnly "you must be laboring under some delusion. As I have not the honor of your acquaintance, you can have no possible right to question where I should or should not be. At the same time, I feel bound to remark that this is not a proper moment for conversation, and I must beg you not to address me again; at any rate while the acting is going on. If you have anything to say to me afterward I shall be happy to hear you."

Surely this is right, for I felt I had spoken well, and doubtless he thought so, too; for though he looked at me from time to time he did not speak to me again till the curtain fell at the end of the first act. But no sooner had it touched the floor than he turned on me at once.

"And now, sir," said he, triumphantly, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"Nothing," I replied; "and if it is not disrespectful to gray hairs, sir, I beg to return the compliment."

"Confound you," cried the old man, springing up; "this is too much! A joke is a joke, but it won't do to carry it too far. I have found you out, and you should try to conciliate and not to aggravate me."

"Sir," I replied, "all you say is doubtless perfectly true; but it is quite beyond my powers of comprehension."

He put his double gold eyeglass tightly on his nose, and looked at me long and keenly. I had risen, too, and stood facing him. At last he said, with a sad resentment:

"Edward, is this the right way for a son to treat a father?"

"You are laboring under some mistake," I answered, gently, for there was a moist look about the old man's eyes suggestive of tears. "I *have* no father; I only wish I had."

There was silence between us, and Tom stood regarding us both curiously.

At length my strange acquaintance broke out again.

"Nonsense, boy! Do you think I don't know my own son?"

"But surely, sir," I replied, "you do not suppose me to be he!"

"It would be strange, indeed, if I could mistake my own child," he answered, with a plaintive smile. "Edward, you have carried this folly far enough, indeed too far."

What was I to do? what to say? How was I to convince this gentleman, whom I supposed to be wandering in his mind, that he had made a ludicrous blunder in mistaking me for his son? Here my honest friend Tom came to my rescue.

"If you are really serious, sir, in what you say, I can relieve any anxiety you may feel on the subject. That gentleman and I have been friends since we were boys together at Eton; and even in those days he had no father."

The people were now again taking their places, and the opening of the second act put a stop to further conversation; but I felt that my would-be relation scarcely removed his eyes from my face; still, he never spoke again until the play was entirely finished, and I was showing signs of leaving the theater. He then placed his hand kindly on my arm.

"My boy," he said, "I will forgive you if only you will acknowledge that you have been wrong to play such a trick on your father. You should not have left your work when you knew how much I wished you to pass your examination well; but now that you are so near home, you must not return to Cambridge without a look at your mother. I am going down by the last train, and you will go with me."

"My dear sir," I exclaimed, "I will do anything you wish. I see you believe what you say; but, indeed, not only am I not your son, but I have never had the pleasure of seeing you before."

A smile was lurking round the old man's mouth.

"Well, well, you will come home with me, at any rate."

"Certainly, if it will ease your mind;" then suddenly remembering Tom Bruce, "that is, if my friend will excuse me for a few hours; I must be back very early in the morning. Where is it we are going?"

"Where, but to Richmond?" he answered, impatiently; "you know we do not leave there for some weeks yet."

"Never mind me," exclaimed Tom, good-naturedly; "give me the latch-key, that is all;" this aloud, and then in a whisper: "Who knows, George, but you may find the silver spoon at the bottom of this? You had better go and see it out."

I meekly handed him the key, and we went out of the theater together. I made one more protest, but it was useless; my old new father placed his hand within my arm and drew me into a "four-wheeler," as though fearing I should escape from a hansom. We drove to Waterloo, and were soon in the train. A handsome carriage and pair met us at Richmond Station, and I had to follow my new-made acquaintance into it. I began to feel most uncomfortable. Here was I, a perfect stranger, driving up to the house of—I did not know whom, and supposed to be a member of the family. What was to become of me? I had come, out of sheer good-nature, entirely because of the dewy look in the old man's eyes; and now I saw what a fool I was likely to make of myself. I had no means of getting back to London that night, and I had not even a razor or a night-shirt—not even a clean collar for the morrow; and, what was worse still, I should have to go up in my dress-clothes. These reflections were not very comforting; but it was of now use to show my vexation to my peculiar friend.

At length the silence was broken by the carriage stopping suddenly.

"Here we are!" he cried, eagerly preparing to get out.

"I beg your pardon," I said, detaining him; "but I should be obliged if you would tell me your name; it is awkward, not knowing."

He burst out laughing.

"Come, drop that nonsense, Teddy; it's too absurd!"

The carriage-door flew open, and I followed my companion out.

"Good-night, Mr. Edward," said the footman.

"Glad to see you, sir!" exclaimed the butler. "This is an *one*expected pleasure; thought as how you were at Cambridge still, Mr. Edward."

My strange acquaintance looked at me triumphantly.

"Where is your mistress, Johnson? is she up still?"

"O yes, sir, and Miss Ida, too; they both said as how they would wait for you, sir."

It did not take us long to relieve ourselves of our hats, etc., and then I found myself following my host and the butler up some broad, softly-carpeted stairs. The man threw open a door, and I could see before me a drawing-room of large proportions, beautifully furnished, and two ladies advancing to meet us with outstretched arms.

"Here is an unexpected pleasure for you, mamma!" said my companion, blithely.

"O Edward, my darling!" exclaimed the elder lady, throwing her arms about my neck and hugging me heartily.

"But how *did* you get away at the present time, my dear boy?"

"Come! leave a little piece of him for me, mother," cried the girl, kissing me affectionately.

And then, as though in that kiss she had found me out, she started, and looked at me keenly, but said nothing. As for me, I felt like a traitor and a villain. Here was I—not willingly, to be sure, but none the less certainly—in this house, sailing under false colors, receiving welcomes and greetings which were decidedly never intended for me. I was too utterly bewildered to guess even at what it could mean. No doubt it was some curious and most unfortunate mistake. Ida's lips were the sweetest I had ever touched, and I was sorely tempted to give her kiss for kiss. Perhaps my omitting to do so caused her to look at me so strangely. They were all crowding round me with questions and kindly words, and I felt I could bear it no longer.

"My dear sir," I exclaimed impatiently, "you are placing me in a very painful position. What *can* I do to convince you that I am a st anger to you?"

Ida changed color, from white to red and from red to white. The elder lady looked from one of us to the other for an explanation of my words.

"Is it not absurd?" said the old gentleman. "I have brought him home almost by force, protesting to the last that he has never seen me before; but now he is carrying the joke too far."

Ida (how pretty and graceful she was!) walked quietly up to a reading-lamp, which stood on a table at some distance off, and raised it to my face.

"O papa!" she exclaimed, "this is not Teddy. What *is* to be done? Don't you remember he has a scar across his right eyebrow, which this gentleman has not?" It was difficult to convince him even then; but the mamma disowned me at once.

"Only to think that *I* should for a moment have been deceived!" she said, apologetically. "But, indeed, the likeness is marvelous!"

Ida said but little; and whenever our eyes met she blushed, remembering, doubtless, how warmly she had embraced me.

I soon found out that my host was a Mr. Bayley, who almost overpowered me with apologies for his mistake.

They insisted upon my sleeping there, and I accepted on condition that they would let me depart before they were down in the morning, that I might escape the observation my dress-clothes would call upon me from the very *gamins* in the London streets; and also I was really anxious to see my friend Tom Bruce, and explain to him the curious events of the evening.

To this they agreed, exacting from me a promise that I would come down again before they left Richmond for the sea. "An acquaintance so strangely begun," they said, "must not be allowed to fall through."

And Mr. Bayley even now found it hard to believe his mistake, and could scarcely take his eyes off my face, which so curiously resembled his own son's.

The next morning an early breakfast was brought to me in my room, and I was en route to London before my new friends were awake. I escaped the jeers of the street arabs by jumping into a hansom and whirling home as fast as the horse could carry me.

Tom was still asleep, but roused up when I opened his bedroom door, and called loudly for me to come in.

"Holloa! who is that? O, George, my boy, it is you, is it? Come and tell me all about it. Have you found the silver spoon, eh?"

"I have found the prettiest girl I ever saw in all my life," I replied with a smile.

"O, it's *that sort of spoon*, is it?" cried he, with a loud guffaw. "Well, George, I didn't expect that of you, and you so many years my junior; but I forgive you, my boy, and will be best man. When is it to be?"

"My dear Bruce, what are you driving at? I tell you I have met a pretty girl, and you ask when it's to be? You and my new friend, Mr. Bayley, might run in a curricle for two lunatics, I really think," I answered, impatiently.

"Whew!" cried Tom; "bad as all that, are you? Well, well, it's what we all come to sooner or later; it's a complaint it is better to have young. Now, George, what's she like?"

"Who?" I replied, resentfully. "Do you mean Miss Ida Bayley?"

"Yes, to be sure, if that is her name."

"Well, then, Miss Bayley is the prettiest girl I ever saw," I answered, enthusiastically.

"Yes, I know," replied he, calmly; "you mentioned that before."

"Why, Bruce, old man, you don't expect me to describe every feature, do you, like a cheap Jack at a fair? and if I would, I couldn't. How do I know the color of her eyes?—but I know how they look. What does it matter to me whether her mouth is the shape of Cupid's bow or not?—I know how it smiles. Ida Bayley is not the girl you could criticise as you talk to her; you *feel* she is there—that if she is *not* beautiful, beauty can not be worth having."

I looked up at my friend, who was regarding me fairly open-mouthed.

"Do you understand?" I asked.

"Quite," he replied, with an honest smile, "and I congratulate you; and now, George, tell me—has Miss Ida a sister? If so, I think I will accompany you to Richmond."

Well, of course, I went down into Surrey again; and, odd as it may seem, I became quite a favorite with all the Bayley family. It was my strange resemblance to the absent Edward, no doubt, which endeared me to them; but, whatever the reason may have been, the loop-line Waterloo Station ticket-clerk soon grew familiar with my destination, and gave me my ticket for Richmond as a matter of course when my face appeared looking through the pigeon-hole at him.

The Bayleys were going to the Isle of Wight, and, strange to say, I found *I* was going there, too; though I fully believed myself to have made up my mind to have a good month's sport among the birds with Tom Bruce over his father's well-preserved acres. But I discovered now, for the first time, that I didn't care much for shooting; and the prospect of some trips with the Bayleys in their yacht was a delightful anticipation to me, outweighing all other counterbalancing influences.

We all went down together, and a happy time, indeed, we had of it. Too many others have described the beautiful island to need any word of mine to echo its praises; and there are few who have not seen the fairy-like isle for themselves; but I must say, as we first beheld it on that bright autumn day, with the sun glinting upon its pretty houses, and lighting up the green of its verdure, while the sky and clouds were reflected on the water, lending it their violet and azure shades, blended and softened, and the white sails of the yachts skimmed butterfly-like upon its surface, I thought I had never seen anything more softly lovely. One felt as though it were a sort of dreamland, from which it would be terrible to awake to life's stern realities; and I think Ida felt it so, too, for she was silent, and her eyes had a far-off look in them, as if she were seeing visions which were hid from others. Yes; certainly that holiday of mine was one of the happiest periods of my life! I shall never, never forget it. I do not know how it came about; but somehow I found I had told Ida of my love. It must have been owing to the beauty of the scene surely, and her own loveliness; for though I had loved her from that first night when her dear lips had met mine, I never intended to have let her know my secret, fearing so greatly to lose all while grasping at more. But I had done it in a moment of unrestrainable feeling and agitation, and how glad I am I did! for, poor match as I am for her, my Ida gave me all her dear love when I asked for it; and, indeed, she acknowledged, with a sweet warm blush, that it had been mine before I asked it at all.

What Ida wished every one wished; so Mr. and Mrs. Bayley were kind and good to me. But of course they felt they must not let me have her without a little tantalization; so we were to wait till Christmas before we were to be considered actually engaged, as our acquaintance had been so short a one. It only made me love her the more to have my happiness retarded; and I looked forward to that Christmas-day as I have never done before, and never shall do again.

It came at last, and my darling was ready to fly into the arms that were eagerly stretched to clasp her. And before I had half made up my mind to release her the door suddenly opened, and, looking quickly round, I was never so astonished in my life; for I saw my shadow—no, not shadow, for that is lifeless, but what appeared to be my very *self*—walking across the room. Ida stood by with a smile to watch the meeting, and we two men gazed steadily at one another, and then burst into uncontrollable fits of laughter.

"It *is* absurd!" we both remarked, in a breath.

And so it was, for even our voices were similar.

Edward Bayley and I became great friends; and many a trick have we played successfully in consequence of our strange likeness to each other—a fact I have never ceased to be thankful for, for did it not gain me my wife?

Ida says she does not think we are so much alike as we were; but having been some years married she, doubtless, knows my face as others do not, and has found out in it beauties for herself which are invisible to other eyes, and which none but hers would have discovered.—*Tinsley's Magazine.*

A Mother's Sad Meeting With Her Four Sons.

ONE of the saddest scenes ever witnessed in the Missouri Penitentiary transpired to-day. A mother met four of her sons wearing the striped suits as convicts within its walls. Their names and crimes, as recorded on the Penitentiary rolls, are: James Greenwade, aged 30 years; ten years for robbery; received November 30 last. Luther Greenwade, aged 26; seven years for robbery and larceny. Breckinridge Greenwade, aged 25; seven years for robbery and larceny. Henry Greenwade, aged 20; ten years for robbery and larceny; received day before yesterday; all from Bates County.

The father and mother of these men live in Jefferson, near Mount Sterling, Ky.; keep a hotel there, and are tolerably well to do in life. Four or five years ago the elder brother came to Missouri and bought a farm near Butler, in Bates County. The younger brothers followed soon after, and the four lived together on the place, the oldest being married. Neighbors looked upon them as people of means, and respectable. For two or three years all sorts of devilment was perpetrated in and about Butler. Persons were waylaid and robbed by disguised men, mails were rifled, burglaries committed and hogs stolen. At length suspicion centered on the Greenwades, and they were watched by officers and citizens and at last caught "dead to rights." Mail pouches, cut open and rifled, were found in the cellar, and other stolen property on their premises. Conviction was easy, and they were landed in the Penitentiary. At the time stated the mother, hearing her sons were in trouble, posted in haste to Bates County, only to learn that they had all been convicted of crimes and taken to the State-prison. With her daughter-in-law and the latter's two children she reached Jefferson City to-day and at once proceeded to the Penitentiary. The meeting with her sons was terribly affecting, and it is asserted Deputy Warden Bradbury for once in his life gave way to the melting mood.

"My God," she exclaimed, "that a mother should live to see four of her beloved boys in such a place!"

The officials were kind and tender to the afflicted ones, but they had at last to use force in separating the mother from her sons, and induced her to leave them after a visit of three or four hours.

Mrs. Greenwade, Sr., is a woman of not over fifty years in appearance, well mannered, strong-minded and intelligent; but the fearful realization was more than her mother's heart could bear unmoved, and she gave vent to her shame and sorrow in a manner more affecting than was ever before witnessed within the prison walls. She left for her Kentucky home this evening, taking her daughter-in-law and the children with her.

There is one more son, who will doubtless never disgrace his name, for he is a minister of the gospel in good standing. One of the convicts is in the Prison Hospital.—*Cor. St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

A MAGNETIC sand, imported from the Isle of Bourbon, and since found near Morbihan, is said by M. Edard to have the property of rapidly reviving plants which had shown pronounced symptoms of decay through disease.

THE experiment of running a locomotive without brakes has just been successfully tried by the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company. An appliance by which power was applied against the piston was used.

DR. OSCAR JENNINGS, a physician of standing in Paris, writes to the London *Lancet* that in the treatment of mental disease he has constantly used music, which calms and soothes the mind, and is too precious an agent to be neglected. Concerts form a part of the regular treatment in many asylums. It will be remembered that Saul found satisfaction in music.

DR. CECH, of St. Petersburg, suggests to inventors the desirability of securing some apparatus which will collect the fine volatile oil of the coffee bean, one-half of which is lost by the present mode of roasting. The beans contain 8 to 13 per cent. of this oil, which has all the flavor of coffee, and which would, if saved, form an excellent material for liquors. In 1878 the quantity of coffee roasted is estimated at about 123,000 tons.

MICA has been applied to a new use, that of fashioning it into middle soles to boots and shoes. The invention consists of a sheet of mica imbedded in thin coatings of cement, and placed in the boot or shoe under and adjacent to the in-sole, the upper leather of the shoe lapping over its edges, or next under the filling, or between the filling and the outer or bottom sole, and covering the upper space from the toe to the instep.

To obviate the dangers and troubles caused by high steps to passenger coaches, Miss Skerritt, a young lady of Albany, N. Y., has invented and patented a folding step which when lowered comes within a foot of the ground. When the train is ready to start the steps are turned out of the way by means of a lever, which always holds them secure. This renders them free from ice and cinders, and in descending from them one is in no danger of slipping. Another important feature is that when folded these steps prevent passengers from jumping off or on the cars. The Delaware & Hudson Railroad Company is testing the invention.

PITH AND POINT.

SHIPWRECKED sailors never need starve while there is a bight of rope left.—*Lowell Citizen.*

THE world is filling up with educated fools—mankind read too much and learn too little.—*Josh Billings.*

"WHAT is fame?" asks the Philadelphia *American*. Fame is the result of being civil to newspaper men.—*Boston Post.*

ARKANSAS women love to whistle.—*Boston Post.* And what is more lovely than tulips well blown?—*Philadelphia Bulletin.*

No matter about the strike of the ice-cutters up the Hudson. The ice crop is large and well set, and the harvest will be immense, unless an untimely frost should nip the blossoms.—*Andrews' Queen.*

WHAT becomes of all the "old war horses" after the campaign is over and the President is elected? Do they go back to the plough? And echo answers "neigh; they go to the trough."—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

THE young men of this § are —ing in appearance, and are un‖ed for * gazing; they are .... of fashion, and do not need ~~ a lamp-post to keep themselves perpendicular.—*Nyack City and Country.*

"MANAGEMENT of the world's fair" is troubling New York just now. It is a problem that Adam struggled with when there was only one world's fair, and she got the best of him.—*New Haven Register.*

GLIMPSE of a future event: An immense ship carrying the Washington Monument from the United States, then an ancient and abandoned country, to the grand republic of Africa, to be set up in the big square in the City of Timbuctoo. But we may euchre the Vandals after all by not completing the monument. Ha! ha! We shall prove too much for posterity. We are a wonderful people.—*N. Y. Graphic.*

THE *Textile Record* has an engraving of an "improved self-acting-mule." It is generally understood that all mules are self-acting, and it is with pleasure that we note any improvement in the animal. The improvement seems to do away with the familiar appearance of the mule; in fact, the picture makes it look more like a spinning machine than a mule. Still it is to be presumed that the kicks are softened like the gentle fanning of an autumn zephyr.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Lost Letters.

LETTERS are sometimes lost and found in an odd way. A letter containing money and directed to a New York man, was, with others, given to the carrier to deliver. Soon after, the man to whom the letter was addressed complained that it had not been delivered. An investigation was made, but without any satisfactory result. The next year, during the season of "spring cleaning," the mystery was solved. The oilcloth in the hallway was taken up, and on the floor, close to the front door, was found the letter which had so long been missing. The place had been closed when visited by the carrier, and in thrusting the letter under the door he had pushed it beneath the floor covering. Some years ago, a young man was discharged from a Connecticut post-office on suspicion of dishonesty. The suspicion arose from the unaccountable disappearance of some money letters from the box rented by an insurance company. When the cool weather of autumn caused the president of this company again to wear the light overcoat which he had laid aside at the end of spring, he found these letters in one of the pockets. Then he remembered that he must have taken them from the office one Sunday morning, on his way to church, afterward forgetting them, and putting away his overcoat for the season. Thus an innocent young man had suffered from the criminal carelessness of another.